

Are You Winning or Losing?

In the race to get more cows pregnant, having the tools to monitor, measure and make adjustments is critical for success

Anne Marie Elwing, DVM, is a busy woman. Not only is she a practicing veterinarian with more than 100 clients south of LaCrosse, Wis., she also milks 300 cows, farms 1,300 acres of a variety of crops, raises 50 hogs, and has a 200-plus steer operation with varying degrees of feeding, selling and showing involved. And she dabbles in milk futures just for fun.

"I have a lot of demands on my time," Elwing admits. "I want to service my clients well, but also need to tend to my own operation and team."

When her Pharmacia (now Pfizer Animal Health) representative started talking to her a couple of years ago about a revolutionary dairy management program, Elwing was ready to listen. "The 100-Day ContractSM Dairy Wellness Plan was perfect for me and many of my clients," she says. "One of my favorite parts is scheduling assistance. I have such little time to finish my own duties, this program really helps me sort through my responsibilities for any given day."

Taking a look at the 100-Day ContractSM Manager software is one of the first things Elwing does every day. The software allows her to review her lists of cows and scrutinize their productivity. She checks first-service pregnancy rates and looks for any statistical changes. "The program captures a huge amount of data from different areas of the dairy, yet it's easy for me to review quickly and see if things are working or if they need to change. And I work with my clients to do the same thing for them."

Measuring and adjusting for improvement are two of the most critical capabilities of the 100-Day Contract and why it was developed. "We were working on putting together the best and most effective dry, fresh and breeding programs for dairy producers," says Austin Belschner, DVM, dairy veterinary operations manager, Pfizer Animal Health. "We had all the elements that should point to better reproductive success, but we questioned how we would tell if we were winning or losing."

Belschner and his colleagues reviewed how dairies were measuring their success and realized that all of them looked at statistics such as calving intervals, days open, conception rates, etc., on a 12-month basis. "If a dairy producer put a new program in place or changed one part of his operation, it would take months before he knew whether or not it was working," notes Belschner. "Making effective changes to improve reproduction was a slow process."

Rapid Results

A key differentiating factor with the 100-Day Contract Manager is its quick results. The software uses data from nearly all major dairy recordkeeping systems and offers scatter plots of days in milk and first breeding analysis. Producers are then able to view, at a glance, deviations in breeding protocol, cohort and annualized pregnancy rates, pregnancy distribution and culling information. And if producers work with their veterinarians to upload their data on a bi-weekly basis, they have plenty of opportunity to analyze a problem, plan a solution and execute that solution in time to make rapid changes.

"One of the program's biggest selling points with my clients is the easy-to-read color charts and graphs," Elwing says. "We can view records from a more visual standpoint. The complex statistical data is easy to understand and quick to grasp. My clients and I really appreciate that."

As Elwing was reviewing her own data recently, she noticed heavy, involuntary culling and death loss. Through an exhaustive series of tests and analyses, she found a deadly level of toxin in the corn they were feeding the herd. "The situation was really hurting our breeding rates, which we could easily see with the program's scatter plot analysis," Elwing says. "Our goal is to come out of this illness as

quickly as possible so the cows can stay enrolled in the breeding programs."

One of the newest tools the software provides will help Elwing with her goal—analysis of culling rates that can be evaluated on a weekly basis. "We've always focused on annual culling rates," says Mark Kirkpatrick, DVM, MS, dairy senior veterinarian, Pfizer Animal Health. "But that number doesn't change very fast due to the removal history in an annual evaluation. Cohort analysis allows producers to observe the number of culls and trends taking place in the first 30 days."

The software also provides cull analysis for the first 60 days post freshening. Producers can tell if the problem is continuing. "With the updated culling rate analysis, we'll be able to track our progress of eliminating the high toxin levels," Elwing says. "I'm excited to see that number decrease."

A Sauk City, Wis., dairyman also recently spotted a problem with the help of the 100-Day Contract Manager analysis. Mitch Breunig, part-owner of Mystic Valley Dairy, a family Holstein business, says that when they started auto-enrolling their cows on an Ovsynch breeding program, one of the employees interpreted the shot list incorrectly.

"With the program's cohort analysis, it was easy to tell that something wasn't right," Breunig says. "One of the shots was being administered wrong, and the 100-Day Contract Manager helped us see it quickly and clearly."

Measuring Success

"We had always been relatively successful," Breunig says. "But we wanted to learn more about working with transition cows to breed them back. The 100-Day Contract fits how we manage our cows and our goals for the future."

One of the ways Breunig can now measure his success more accurately is with the cohort analysis provided by the software. "I can see trends develop, get a quick snapshot of how things are going, and break it down to target specific parts like first-service conception rate. Based on some changes we've made, we've gone from a consistent first-service pregnancy rate of 20 to 25 percent to always being in the high 30s for most of the herd. The best news is our 2-year-old heifers are consistently at around 50 percent."

Mystic Valley Dairy has been so successful at breeding their cows that they are raising an extra 40 cows each year for sale stock. "We're always marketing extra cows," Breunig says. "Most herds our size, around 400 head, have higher cull rates and need the extras for themselves."

Breunig credits the opportunities for analyzing and adjusting protocols to the 100-Day Contract Manager. He explains that the advantage of being able to upload data with their veterinarian on a weekly basis allows them to continually improve their processes. "We approach the operation systematically," he adds. "It helps us set goals for the dairy and reach them."

Let It Work For You

"Most dairies we interact with across the country are using some parts of the 100-Day Contract," says Belschner. "When we present the program tools to potential participants, the processes may seem overwhelming at first. We don't recommend implementing every step tomorrow."

Belschner suggests starting with a good fresh cow program and working from there. There are multiple issues relative to nutrition and transition at calving time. Producers can focus on monitoring the cows, taking their temperatures, administering vaccines and treating illnesses to provide the best environment for the cow at around calving.

"It's such a stressful time in a cow's life," Belschner says. "This period very much affects whether or not she'll ever become pregnant again." Once a good fresh cow program

is in place, producers can then move on to putting together a controlled breeding program that will ideally service all fresh cows in the first 10 to 21 days after the voluntary waiting period.

"There are a lot of different breeding programs available, but they all work toward servicing 100 percent of the cows as quickly as possible," Belschner notes. "And if we're not getting the kind of results we want, then we go back and review the dairy's dry cow program."

With the help of nutritionists, producers review their feeding and transition programs for their dry cows. They also review the incidence of mastitis, treatments given for it and other diseases, and vaccinations administered. Appropriate foot care, maintaining proper body condition scores and actions to minimize stress are also important during the dry period.

Both Breunig and Elwing agree with Belschner's suggestions. "I would advise other producers not to take on the entire program all at once," Breunig says. "Figure out the weakest part of your operation and work on fixing that until you're satisfied before moving on."

Elwing adds, "If you're going to use the program tools, use them to their fullest advantage. Be diligent with your recordkeeping and analyze data on a regular basis. And work with your veterinarian to set reachable goals."

Not all dairy producers necessarily set out with the exact same goals each day, each week, each month. But at the end of the year, all dairy producers want to say they had more pregnant cows than the year before. "To my surprise, I occasionally hear someone say he has too many pregnant cows," Belschner says. "And that's a good problem to have—that's a victory."

For more information about how you can make the 100-Day Contract work for your dairy, contact your veterinarian or Pfizer Animal Health territory manager, or visit www.100daycontract.com.

Excenel[®] RTU brand of ceftiofur hydrochloride sterile suspension

For intramuscular and subcutaneous use in cattle. This product may be used in lactating dairy cattle.

CAUTION: Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

INDICATIONS

EXCENEL RTU Sterile Suspension is indicated for treatment of the following bacterial diseases:

- Bovine respiratory disease (BRD, shipping fever, pneumonia) associated with *Mannheimia* spp. (*Pasteurella haemolytica*), *Pasteurella multocida* and *Haemophilus somnus*.
- Acute bovine interdigital necrobacillosis (foot rot, pododermatitis) associated with *Fusobacterium necrophorum* and *Bacteroides melaninogenicus*.
- Acute metritis (0 to 14 days post-partum) associated with bacterial organisms susceptible to ceftiofur.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

As with all drugs, the use of EXCENEL RTU Sterile Suspension is contraindicated in animals previously found to be hypersensitive to the drug.

DOSE AND ADMINISTRATION

– For bovine respiratory disease and acute interdigital necrobacillosis: administer by intramuscular or subcutaneous administration at the dosage of 0.5 to 1.0 mg ceftiofur equivalents/lb (1.1 to 2.2 mg/kg) BW (1 to 2 mL sterile suspension per 100 lb BW). Administer daily at 24 h intervals for a total of three consecutive days. Additional treatments may be administered on Days 4 and 5 for animals which do not show a satisfactory response (not recovered) after the initial three treatments. In addition, for BRD only, administer intramuscularly or subcutaneously 1.0 mg ceftiofur equivalents/lb (2.2 mg/kg) BW every other day on Days 1 and 3 (48 h interval). Do not inject more than 15 mL per injection site. Selection of dosage level (0.5 to 1.0 mg/lb) and regimen/duration (daily or every other day for BRD only) should be based on an assessment of the severity of disease, pathogen susceptibility and clinical response.

– For acute post-partum metritis: administer by intramuscular or subcutaneous administration at the dosage of 1.0 mg ceftiofur equivalents/lb (2.2 mg/kg) BW (2 mL sterile suspension per 100 lb BW). Administer at 24 h intervals for five consecutive days. Do not inject more than 15 mL per injection site.

Shake well before using.

WARNINGS

**NOT FOR HUMAN USE.
KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.**

Penicillins and cephalosporins can cause allergic reactions in sensitized individuals. Topical exposures to such antimicrobials, including ceftiofur, may elicit mild to severe allergic reactions in some individuals. Repeated or prolonged exposure may lead to sensitization. Avoid direct contact of the product with the skin, eyes, mouth, and clothing. Persons with a known hypersensitivity to penicillin or cephalosporins should avoid exposure to this product. In case of accidental eye exposure, flush with water for 15 minutes. In case of accidental skin exposure, wash with soap and water. Remove contaminated clothing. If allergic reaction occurs (e.g., skin rash, hives, difficult breathing), seek medical attention.

RESIDUE WARNINGS: Treated cattle must not be slaughtered for 48 hours (2 days) following last treatment because unsafe levels of drug remain at the injection sites. No milk discard time is required when this product is used according to label directions. Use of dosages in excess of those indicated or by unapproved routes of administration, such as intramammary, may result in illegal residues in edible tissues and/or in milk. A withdrawal period has not been established in pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

PRECAUTIONS

Following intramuscular or subcutaneous administration in the neck, areas of discoloration at the site may persist beyond 11 days resulting in trim loss of edible tissues at slaughter. Following intramuscular administration in the rear leg, areas of discoloration at the injection site may persist beyond 28 days resulting in trim loss of edible tissues at slaughter.

STORAGE CONDITIONS

Store at controlled room temperature 20° to 25° C (68° to 77° F) [see USP]. Shake well before using. Protect from freezing.

HOW SUPPLIED

EXCENEL RTU Sterile Suspension is available in the following package size:
100 mL vial NDC 0009-3504-03

For a copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or to report adverse reactions call Pfizer Animal Health at 1-800-366-5288.
NADA #140-890, Approved by FDA
U.S. Patent Nos. 4,902,683; 5,736,151



Distributed by:
Pfizer Animal Health
Enton, PA 18341, USA
Div. of Pfizer Inc.
New York, NY 10017

Revised January 2002

816 323 307B
692431
3504-03-000



Pfizer Animal Health

